41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

Eyesight

732 BAD VISION

6.29. Badagas can test their eyesight with the help of the moon. On the night of the new moon or the one after that a man is asked if he can see a small line on the lower edge of the moon while it is low in the sky. If he cannot see this, his sight is defective. He must then take a leaf of the castor-oil plant or "some other jungle plant," and keep it on the top of his head for a month, after which he is tested again. "This cure has been known to work sometimes," I am told.

(755)

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6.30. When insects and other small objects get into the eye, somebody blows on a piece of cloth—such as the corner of a loincloth — and when it is warm he wipes the surface of the sufferer's eye with it.

732 BLINDNESS (*kurudu*)

6.31. Badagas have no cure for blindness, and if the sight is defective glasses are nowadays the only normal remedy. One can even find ready-made glasses of varying prescriptions in the bazaars. It is generally believed that if one prays to the sun at sunrise while looking into it, vision will remain good. The deaf and the blind cannot enjoy life, as one proverb maintains: "For a man without ears, what use is a musical instrument? For a man without eyes, what use is the countryside?"

(416)
(782)

164 TRACHOMA OR CONJUNCTIVITIS (*keppu kaṇṇu*)

757

6.32. If the eye turns red, it is because there is too much "heat" in the body: this can be lessened by extra sleep and a change of diet. The patient should also bathe two or three times daily, using the bark of pellitory as soap: it is "cooling" to the eye and the brain, and so brings health.

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6.33. If there is a pain behind the eye, the patient lies on his back with eyes wide open. The best cure is then to squirt five to ten shots of milk directly from a buffalo's teat into his eye: failing buffalo's milk, cow's milk can be administered in the same way. (Only very gentle cattle can be trusted not to step on the patient.) A simpler but less effective treatment is for a woman to squirt five to ten shots